WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for loading configuration data into a programmable device, the system comprising:

a configuration word register comprising a plurality of configuration blocks;

a plurality of configuration inputs selectively coupled with each of the plurality of configuration blocks and adapted to communicate configuration data; and

a plurality of command inputs adapted to independently enable loading of at least one of the plurality of configuration blocks, wherein the plurality of configuration blocks are adapted to simultaneously load configuration data via the plurality of configuration inputs in response to the plurality of command inputs.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of configuration blocks is coupled with one of the plurality of command inputs.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein at least one configuration block comprises a plurality of bits equal in number to the number of configuration inputs.

4. The system of claim 3, wherein at least one configuration block comprises one or more bits, such that the total number of bits is less than the number of configuration inputs.

5. The system of claim 1, further comprising:

a configuration memory having a plurality of memory locations and coupled with the configuration word register, wherein the configuration memory is adapted to load configuration data from the configuration word register.

6. The system of claim 1, further comprising:

a configuration mode input; and

a configuration controller coupled with the configuration mode input, wherein, in response to a first state of the configuration mode input, the configuration controller is adapted to enable the plurality of configuration blocks to simultaneously load configuration data via the plurality of configuration inputs in response to the plurality of command inputs, and, in response to a second state of the configuration mode input, the configuration controller is adapted to enable loading of configuration data into the configuration word register via an alternate coupling with configuration data.

7. The system of claim 6, wherein the alternate coupling with configuration data is via the plurality of configuration inputs.

8. The system of claim 6, wherein the alternate coupling with configuration data is via the plurality of command inputs.

9. The system of claim 6, wherein the alternate coupling with configuration data is adapted to simultaneously load a one bit of configuration data into each of the configuration blocks.

---

10. A method for loading configuration data for a configuration word comprised of a plurality of configuration blocks into a programmable device, the method comprising:

receiving a command word via a plurality of command inputs designating a first subset of the plurality of configuration blocks;

receiving a data word comprising a portion of the configuration data for configuration word via a plurality of configuration inputs; and

simultaneously loading the data word into each one of the subset of configuration blocks designated by the command word.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the steps of receiving the command word, receiving the data word, and loading the data word are repeated for a second data word and a second command word designating a second subset of the plurality of configuration blocks.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the second subset of the plurality of configuration blocks does not intersect the first subset of the plurality of configuration blocks.

13. The method of claim 10, wherein the command word comprises a plurality of command bits, such that each command bit is associated with one of the plurality of configuration blocks.

14. The method of claim 10, wherein at least one configuration block in the first subset of the plurality of configuration blocks comprises a plurality of bits equal in number to the number of configuration inputs.

15. The method of claim 10, further comprising:

loading configuration data from the plurality of configuration blocks into a memory location in a configuration memory.

16. The method of claim 10, further comprising:

receiving a configuration mode via a configuration mode input;

enabling the first subset of the plurality of configuration blocks to simultaneously load configuration data via the plurality of configuration inputs in response to a first state of the configuration mode; and

loading configuration data into the plurality of configuration blocks via an alternate communication means in response to a second state of the configuration mode.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the alternate communication means is via the plurality of configuration inputs.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein the alternate communication means is via the plurality of command inputs.

19. The method of claim 16, wherein loading configuration data into the plurality of configuration blocks comprises:

simultaneously loading one bit of configuration data into each of the plurality of configuration blocks.

20. The method of claim 10, further comprising:

testing the programmable device loaded with the configuration data.

21 The method of claim 20, further comprising:

repeating with a second set of configuration data the steps of receiving a command word, receiving a data word, loading the data word, and testing in order to test the programmable device loaded with the second set of configuration data.

22. A system having a plurality of devices, the system comprising:

a programmable device including:

a configuration word register comprising a plurality of configuration blocks,

a plurality of configuration inputs selectively coupled with each of the plurality of configuration blocks and adapted to communicate configuration data, and

a plurality of command inputs adapted to independently enable at least one of the plurality of configuration blocks, wherein the plurality of configuration blocks are adapted to simultaneously load configuration data via the plurality of configuration inputs in response to the plurality of command inputs; and

an interface for connecting the programmable device with a configuration data source.

23. The system of claim 21, further including:

a configuration source having a set of configuration data and adapted to communicate the set of configuration data with the programmable device.

24. The system of claim 23, wherein the configuration source includes a plurality of different sets of configuration data and is adapted to test the programmable device by successively communicating each of the plurality of different sets of configuration data with the programmable device.